

Wellington Town Council

Town Mayor
Cllr U. Ahmed



Town Clerk
KAREN ROPER
B.A (HONS) DMS
Civic Offices, Larkin Way
Tan Bank, Wellington
Telford TF1 1LX
Tel: 01952 567697

Email: wellingtontowncouncil@telford.gov.uk
www.wellington-shropshire.gov.uk

CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30th January 2025 at CIVIC OFFICES COMMENCING at 6.00pm.

Present

Cllr Carter Chairman	Cllr de Launey	Cllr Pierce	Cllr McGinn	Cllr Cook	Cllr Davis	Cllr Luter
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Also in attendance: Cllrs Gorse, Lowe, Snell, Latter and Karen Roper CEO/Town Clerk

95/24 Welcome - Cllr Carter welcomed members.

96/24 Apologies for absence – All members of the committee were present.

97/24 Declarations of interest - No declarations were received

98/24 Closure of the Meeting – The Chairman proposed to close the meeting to consider a commercial regeneration opportunity, he was seconded by Cllr de Launey. The following members voted in favour, Cllr Carter, de Launey, Pierce, McGinn, Cook, Davis and Luter. There were no votes against and no abstentions.

99/24 Regeneration Opportunity- Members had received the particulars of sale. The Chairman made the following comments.

- Regeneration of Wellington Town Centre began in 2013 working in conjunction with Telford and Wrekin and have over time seen vacant unit numbers drop from 14% to 3%
- Town Council have obtained £500,000 from the public works loan board to contribute to the regeneration projects, initially it had hoped to purchase 4 Market Square.
- 4 Market Square is not for sale and if it did come on to the market it would need a lot of money for renovation as it has been unoccupied for many years. (There were still some hopes that new legislation might help to purchase at some point).
- Old Butchers shop, this building needs renovation and has been to auction but not met the asking price. We are advised by Andrew Dixon the asking price is too high and the property would go back to auction on 6th February. We may still bid for it as it has a strategic location for the Market.
- Halifax Bank, Duke Street Wellington, a valuation of £205,000 was put on the building and carpark, this was felt to be a good investment in the opinion of both Telford and Wrekin officers and local agent, Andrew Dixon. Andrew Dixon has been asked to value the building and had undertaken a report on behalf of the Town Council. A viewing had been undertaken by Town Council Staff together with Andrew Dixon confirming the building was in good condition with just one area of water ingress due to a blocked guttering / drainpipe.
- The addition of the old Oxfam shop has now been included to the particulars increasing the price to £250,000.

The Chairman proposed that the Town Council purchased the building.

- Cllr de Launey said there was a high possibility that the Post Office could move from its current location into the Halifax building operating in conjunction with a convenience and or newsagent outlet bringing footfall into town and a guaranteed income.
- The upper floors could be upmarket residential units with parking spaces.

- The Oxfam shop could be another residential unit or let to a business.
- All the above suggestions would give an income to cover the costs and a return on the investment for the Town Council.
- It was confirmed there were 8 parking spaces with 2 being used by the opticians, the agreement around this arrangement would be explored.
- Cllr Carter said the post office is currently paying rent of £7,500 - £9,000k per year and residential flats with parking spaces at about £800.00 - £850.00 per month, there would also be income from the co-location of a WHS Smith type retail outlet and then there is the shop.
- Cllr Carter said there would be upfront costs initially, including the rateable value quoted at £36,750, energy and refurbishment.
- The Town Council will need to engage with Telford and Wrekin to see who is looking around Wellington for premises.
- The precept cannot be frozen next year so a case will be made showing how additional money is being spent.
- Cllr Davis said he felt this was an exciting proposition with potential for income from more than one source and we would be protecting a property with an iconic frontage. He asked if the rateable value of £36,750 would fall to the Town Council to pay. Cllr Carter said the rates would fall to the tenants of the building.
- Cllr Pierce asked about access for deliveries and collections of parcels by large lorries. Cllr de Launey said there is an option to service the building from Walker Street as well as Roland Gate. Cllr Carter said there would always have competing priorities when trying to regenerate the town centre area for example many of the current projects, such as YMCA, do not have any parking spaces.
- The issue of bins storage was discussed and it was suggested the car park would be used for this purpose.
- The Regeneration Board will focus on developing a plan and looking at the possibilities.
- Cllr Latter asked for confirmation of the money available to the Town Council which was £500,000 now and following the Library takeover a further £450,000.
- Cllr Lowe asked if the same operator would be used for the proposed Post Office. Cllr Carter said this would depend on the status of the existing postmaster. The current incumbent is in a temporary arrangement and hopefully new plans can be made.
- Cllr Carter said he felt that we need to move quickly
- Cllr Pierce asked if the Butchers shop is still an option. Cllr Carter said it is still an option and reported it was exempt from business rates because of its small size.
- Cllr McGinn said the Halifax building proposal seems to represent exceptional value.
- Cllr de Launey said that, if Full Council agree the proposal this evening, Andrew Dixon would put in a bid for £225,000 on behalf of the Town Council on Friday.
- Cllr Carter asked if there were any further questions – there were none

100/24

Cllr Davis proposed that the Town Council purchase the former Halifax Building in Duke Street Wellington, he was seconded by Cllr Pierce and the following members voted in favour Cllr Carter, de Launey, Pierce, McGinn, Cook, Davis and Luter. There were no votes against and no abstentions from the members of P&R.

Cllrs Gorse, Lowe, Snell and Latter also voted in favour

Members were reminded that this information should remain confidential.

Next Meeting Date – was agreed as Tuesday 4th February 2025

Chairman.....4th February 2025